

predetermined number of outer peripheral cells. However, neither Ogawa nor Kasai disclose that the "shielded cells" are sealed by the inner peripheral surface of the outer wall.

Ogawa discloses a typical honeycomb filter having cells bounded by partition walls, and the plurality of cells encased by a peripheral wall. Ogawa also discloses that each cell is plugged at one or both ends by sealing members 4, 4'. See Fig. 4 and col. 4, lines 1-15 of Ogawa. The Office Action asserts these sealed cells are equivalent to the recited shielded cells.

However, as discussed during the personal interview, Ogawa clearly shows that the cells are sealed by a plugging portion 4, not by the peripheral wall. Likewise, Kasai also discloses a honeycomb in which sealing portions plug the ends of cells. See Figs. 5 and 6. Kasai also discloses varying the depth to which the plugs seal the cells. Thus, neither Ogawa nor Kasai discloses cells that are sealed "by an inner peripheral surface of the outer wall" as recited in claims 15 and 22.

During the personal interview, the Examiners stated that if Applicant showed tangible benefits that result from the cells being sealed by the inner peripheral surface of the outer peripheral wall, rather than a plugging portion, the rejection would likely be overcome.

Pages 3, 14 and 18 of the instant specification lay out the benefits of the recited features over the type of arrangement disclosed in Ogawa and Kasai. The instant specification explains that in order to solve a problem of heat loss from fluid flow in the cells adjacent to the outer peripheral wall, known in the art, the claims recite creating shielded cells that are sealed by the peripheral wall, thus ensuring no fluid flow through those cells. See page 14, lines 4-17. These shielded cells serve as a thermal insulating layer and prevent heat loss from flowing fluid to the outer peripheral wall. The specification also states that when the shielded cell is disposed on the outer peripheral part the catalyst can be supported in an effected usable range. See page 18, lines 13-25. Finally, the specification states that the manufacturing

process of creating the recited shielded cells can be accomplished simultaneously with the process of forming the outer wall. See page 30, lines 2-5. By contrast, sealing cells with plugging portions requires an addition step.

Thus, the specification lays out the specific benefits of shielded cells sealed by the outer partition wall rather than using plugging portions as recited in Ogawa and Kawai. Therefore, Ogawa and Kawai do not disclose or suggest cells that are sealed "by an inner peripheral surface of the outer wall" as recited in claims 15 and 22. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 15 and 22, and claims 16-21 and 23 depending therefrom, is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 15-23 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff  
Registration No. 27,075

Moshe K. Wilensky  
Registration No. 56,263

JAO:MKW/jfb

Attachment:  
Petition for Extension of Time

Date: September 5, 2008

**OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC**  
**P.O. Box 320850**  
**Alexandria, Virginia 22320-4850**  
**Telephone: (703) 836-6400**

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